

Message Text

SECRET POSS DUPE

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73

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 ACDA-19 GAC-01 OMB-01 MC-02 TRSE-00 AID-20

IGA-02 EB-11 COME-00 RSR-01 /161 W
----- 082580

R 161532 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0661
INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USCINCEUR
COMIDEASTFOR

S E C R E T MANAMA 0228

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652 : GDSO

TAGS : MAR

SUBJECT : BAHRAIN CONSIDERING IMPROVING DEFENSES

REF : KUWAIT 1163, MADRID 1734 AND STATE 59540

1) SUMMARY: CROWN PRINCE HAMAD AND OTHER GOVT LEADERS ARE SERIOUSLY THINKING ABOUT STEPS TO IMPROVE BAHRAIN'S DEFENSES. REQUIREMENTS FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT ARE BEING CONSIDERED, AND USG WILL APPARENTLY BE CONSULTED ON THIS. HAMAD SAID COASTAL SURVEY PREPARED BY USG IS CLOSE TO HIS OWN THINKING. END SUMMARY.

2) IN TALK APRIL 11 WITH CROWN PRINCE- DEFENSE MINISTER SHAIKH HAMAD, CHARGE ASKED ABOUT REPORT WE HAD OF BAHRAIN'S INTEREST IN BUYING 17 106 MM GUNS FROM SPAIN (MADRID 1734).

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DOING SOME DOUBLE TALK HE NEITHER CONFIRMED NOR DENIED REPORT. HOWEVER, HE DID SAY GOB REQUIREMENTS FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT WERE BEING ANALYZED AND LIST OF NEEDED ITEMS WOULD BE DRAWN UP. HE SAID HE HOPED TO PUT LIST IN HANDS OF GENERAL SMITH IN DHAHRAN. IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHETHER HE THOUGHT GENERAL MIGHT OFFER ADVICE ON LIST OR HELP ARRANGE PROCUREMENT. CHARGE SAID EMBASSY HERE WAS READY TO HELP ANY WAY IT COULD.

3) HAMAD EXPLAINED HOW LACKING GOB WAS IN FUNDS FOR MILITARY PURCHASES IN VIEW OF GREAT AND JUSTIFIED DEMANDS ON STATE'S LIMITED RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL AND HEALTH PROGRAMS. HE ALSO POINTED TO CLEAR THREAT TODAY TO BAHRAIN AND ITS GULF NEIGHBORS FROM COMMUNIST BACKED SUBVERSIVE GROUPS FROM ADEN IN SOUTH AND IRAQ IN NORTH. IT WAS NECESSARY FOR BAHRAIN AND OTHERS TO WORK TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD THEMSELVES. OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SUCCUMB ONE BY ONE.

4) HE SAID HE HAD LOOKED AT COPY OF COASTAL SURVEY REPORT PREPARED BY USG WHICH AMBASSADOR STOLTZFUS HAD GIVEN TO AMIR (KUWAIT 1163). HAMAD ASKED WHAT NEXT STEP WAS. CHARGE SAID IT WOULD BE UP BAHRAIN GOVT NOW TO DECIDE COURSE TO FOLLOW. HAMAD COMMENTED REPORT SEEMED CLOSE TO HIS THINKING. THERE SHOULD BE SEA AND AIR CAPABILITY FOR COASTAL PROTECTION. HE NOTICED PRICE TAG FOR SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT WAS \$5-6 MILLION AND SAID THAT WOULD BE PROBLEM.

5) DURING TALK HAMAD MENTIONED HE HOPED TO VISIT U. S. THIS SUMMER FOR A MONTH TO SEE MORE OF OUR COUNTRY THAN HE WAS ABLE TO DURING HIS YEAR AT COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF SCHOOL.

6) COMMENT: CLEARLY AMIR, HAMAD AND OTHER GOB LEADERS ARE SERIOUSLY THINKING ABOUT STEPS TO IMPROVE DEFENSES OF THEIR SMALL ISLAND. IF THEY HAVE GOOD ADVICE, ODDS ARE THEY WILL BE REALISTIC. POSSIBLE SOURCES OF FUNDS WOULD APPEAR TO BE KUWAIT AND SAUDI ARABIA, BOTH OF WHOM HAVE STRATEGIC INTERESTS IN THEIR SMALLER AND POORER NEIGHBOR.
STEIN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** SECRET

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973MANAMA00228
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: MANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730443/aaaaioup.tel
Line Count: 106
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 KUWAIT 1163, 73 MADRID 1734, 73 STATE 59540
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Aug-2001 by willialc>; APPROVED <07-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980120
Subject: BAHRAIN CONSIDERING IMPROVING DEFENSES
TAGS: MARR, n/a
To: COMIDEASTFOR
DHAHRAN
JIDDA
KUWAIT
LONDON
NEA
SECSTATE WASHDC

TEHRAN
USCINCEUR

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005